

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (REUSS, HRNEY S.)
SUBJ: CODEL REUSS:BENTSEN TALKS WITH KENG PIAO AND HAO TEH-CHING --
HIGHLIGHTS

1. SUMMARY: CODEL REUSS/BENTSEN DISCUSSIONS WITH KENG PIAO AND HAO TEH-CHING BROKE NO NEW GROUND EXCEPT FOR AN UNEXPECTED INVITATION FROM KENG FOR A DELEGATION OF US PETROLEUM EXPERTS TO VISIT CHINA. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS GOOD IN BOTH SESSIONS AND NEITHER CHINESE LEADER SEEMED INTERESTED IN ARGUING WITH CODEL MEMBERS ABOUT US-PRC DIFFERENCES. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL REUSS/BENTSEN MET MARCH 27 AND 28 WITH VICE PREMIER KENG PAIO AND CPIFA PRESIDENT HAO TEH-CHING. KENG SEEMED CAUTIOUS BUT WELL BRIEFED AND AUTHORITATIVE IN HIS FIRST MEETING WITH A HIGH LEVEL US DELEGATION. HAO GAVE HIS USUAL EARTHY PERFORMANCE PROVIDING, AS HE DID WITH CODEL CRANSTON IN JANUARY, MORE BONHOMIE THAN BLUSTER. NEITHER HAO NOR KENG BROKE NEW GROUND ON THE TAIWAN QUESTION. IN RESPONSE TO PROBING BY REUSS ON HOW PRC INTENDS TO PROCEED TO REINTEGRATE TAIWAN WITH MAINLAND, NEITHER KENG NOR HAO WOULD GO BEYOND A MILD WARNING THAT THE QUESTION WAS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR OF
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CHINA. REUSS' REFERENCES TO CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS OF THE TAIWAN RECOVERY PROBLEM WERE IGNORED BY HAO AND ANSWERED WITH A REFERENCE BY KENG TO THE DISPARITY BETWEEN TAIWAN'S 16 MILLION POPULATION AND THE MAINLAND'S 800 MILLION.

3. HAO HAVE ONE OF THE STRONGER FORMULATIONS AMERICAN

DELEGATIONS HAVE RECEIVED IN RECENT MONTHS ON THE RELATIVE LACK OF IMPORTANCE OF THE TAIWAN ISSUE WHEN COMPARED WITH STRATEGIC GLOBAL CONCERNS. THE MOST CRUCIAL QUESTION FACING THE WORLD, HE SAID, WAS SOVIET EXPANSION. IN THE ABSENCE OF NORMALIZATION, "THE STRATEGIC ISSUE WILL UNAVOIDABLY BE AFFECTED TO A CERTAIN EXTENT." BUT "THE SKY WILL NOT FALL DOWN ON US" WITHOUT NORMLAIZATION.

4. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HAO REFERRED TO THE 1950 SINO-SOVIET TREATY AS A TREATY IN NAME ONLY, WITH NO SIGNIFICANCE. REUSS LATER PRESSED KENG ON WHETHER WE COULD LIKEWISE SIMPLY DECLARE OUR TREATY WITH TAIWAN AS A MEANINGLESS DEAD LETTER. KENG REJECTED THE COMPARISON. HE DID, HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT SINO-SOVIET TREATY WOULD COME TO AN END IN 1980, ITS FORMAL EXPIRATION DATE.

5. BOTH LEADERS MADE INDIRECT REFERENCES TO US APPEASEMENT POLICIES. KENG IN PARTICULAR CITED US NEWS SOURCES FOR HIS STATEMENT THAT AMERICAN MACHINES WERE MANUFACTURING SOVIET TANKS. BUT HE REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO AN ARGUEMENT WITH CONGRESSMAN LONG WHO POINTED OUT INCONSISTENCIES OF ACCUSING US OF APPEASEMENT WHILE AT SAME TIME MAINTAINING TREATY WITH SOVIETS AND RAILING AGAINST AMERICAN IMPERIALISTIC POLICIES.
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6. HAO MADE STANDARD NOISES ABOUT THE DANGER OF WAR, IF NOT IN FIVE-SIX YEARS THEN PROBABLY IN EIGHT-TEN YEARS. HE WENT FURTHER THAN USUAL, HOWEVER, ABOUT ADMITTING THE POSSIBILITY OF A SINO-SOVIET WAR, AND STATED THAT THE LONGER IT WAS POSTPOINED, THE BETTER PREPARED THE CHINESE WOULD BE TO FIGHT IT. FOR HIS PART, KENG STATED EXPLICITLY THAT CHINA DOES NOT CONSIDER ITSELF MILITARILY THREATENED BY THE UNITED STATES.

7. HAO AND KENG SHOWED A CERTAIN INCONSISTENCY ON THE QUESTION OF THE RELATION OF TRADE TO NORMALIZATION. IN ANSWER TO A DIRECT QUESTION, HAO SAID THAT WHILE SOLUTION OF SUCH ISSUES AS MOST FAVORED NATION OR STRATEGIC TRADE CONTROLS COULD RESULT IN "CORRESPONDING DEVELOPMENTS," THE "FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION" WAS STILL NORMALIZATION. UNTIL THAT ISSUE WAS SOLVED, THE US WOULD STILL REMAIN A RESUDUAL SUPPLIER. KENG, ON THE OTHER HAND, SPOKE OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR INCREASED TRADE IN A MANNER WHICH IMPLIED THAT NORMALIZATION WOULD NOT BE A MAJOR CONSIDERATION.

8. KENG ALSO ISSUED AN INVITATION FOR A DELEGATION OF US

PETROLEUM EXPERTS TO VISIT CHINA, USLO COMMENTS FOLLOW BY
SEPTEL.
WOODCOCK

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